Expansion of runway in Tiruchirapally

1358. SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to expand the runway in Tiruchirapally, Madurai and Coimbatore Airports;

(b) how many flights are operated in the said Airports; and

(c) whether there is any proposal to operate Indian Airlines flights from Chennai to Tiruchirapally?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Number of flights operated per week at Tiruchirapally, Madurai and Coimbatore airports are 25,28 and 76 respectively.

(c) Currently Indian Airlines is already operating two flights per week from Chennai to Calicut *via* Tiruchirapally and four flights per week from Chennai to Trivandrum *via* Tiruchirapally.

Air connectivity to Bodhgaya

1359. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Orissa has made a request for routing of the Delhi-Bhubaneshwar flight through Varanasi or Bodhgaya to help the Buddhist tourists to visit Orissa, which is a heritage centre of Buddhist tourism; and

(b) if so, the status of the proposal and the time-frame within which it would be sanctioned to boost tourism of the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Requests were received earlier which could not be acceded to since the traffic potential does not warrant such operations and it would also cause inconvenience to travelling passengers between Bhubaneshwar and Delhi.

Indian Airlines has no plans at present to reroute its Delhi-Bhubaneshwar flight *via* Varanasi or Gaya due to low traffic potential. Indian Airlines operates from Kolkata to both Bhubaneshwar and Gaya and passengers desirous of travelling between Gaya and Bhubaneshwar can avail of flight connections *via* Kolkata.